

well mean the difference between success and failure on current and future battlefields. General Shinseki successfully met every challenge during his tenure as Chief of Staff with professionalism, commitment, and perseverance.

To Ric and his wife Patti, God speed and enjoy a well-deserved retirement.

The United States Army will miss you and so will we.

HEALTH CARE BENEFITS FOR FILIPINO VETERANS

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2003

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill that would provide the Filipino veterans of World War II who now live in the United States health care benefits on the same basis as if they were veterans of the U.S. armed services.

This legislation would require the Secretary of Veteran Affairs, within the limits of the Department's facilities, to provide hospital, nursing home and medical care services to certain Filipino World War II veterans of the Philippines Commonwealth Army and former Philippines New Scouts who legally reside in the United States, in the same manner as their American veteran peers.

The substance of this bill was included in the Veterans Health Care and Procurement Improvement Act of 2002 that passed the House last year, but failed to clear the other Body. I thank the President for his leadership and acknowledgement of the importance of addressing the health care issues of the Filipino veterans by recently requesting the introduction and prompt consideration of similar legislation this Congress. I also acknowledge the advocacy of my colleague from California, Mr. FILNER, who for years has kept this issue before the House as a matter of equity and recognition for an important allied force during a time of great peril for this Nation.

Currently, Commonwealth Army veterans residing in the U.S. are only eligible for VA health care services for treatment of service-connected disabilities and for non service-connected disabilities if they are in receipt of certain compensation. My bill would remove these barriers to treatment of veterans of World War II who are of Filipino descent by eliminating the receipt-of-compensation requirement for Commonwealth Army veterans and extending to new Philippine Scouts the same eligibility for medical care and services as Commonwealth Army veterans. Commonwealth Army veterans and new Philippine Scouts would be subject to the same eligibility and means test requirements as their American counterparts.

The military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines were called into the United States Armed Forces during World War II by President Roosevelt's Executive Order. Under the Command of General MacArthur, the Filipino soldiers served side-by-side with forces from the United States and exhibited great courage at the battles of Bataan and Corregidor. The participation of the Filipino forces delayed and disrupted the initial Japanese effort to control the Western Pacific and was

vital to giving the U.S. time to prepare the forces necessary to defeat Japan.

When the United States granted independence to the Philippines, Congress passed the Rescission Act of 1946, reducing or eliminating many of the veterans' benefits for which Filipino veterans had been eligible, based on service in the Commonwealth Army. The reclassification of their service to the United States during World War II by the Rescissions Act unfortunately left many Filipino veterans residing in the United States without eligibility for VA health care.

It is due time that these Filipino veterans are given the health care benefits they have been waiting more than 50 years to receive. I urge all my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this bill, one that recognizes our Nation's moral obligation to extend VA health care services to the approximately 14,000 Filipino veterans who are in their senior years here in the United States.

THE BINGE ISN'T OVER FOR DILLER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2003

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following article for the RECORD.

[From the Washington Post, June 5, 2003]

THE BINGE ISN'T OVER FOR DILLER

(By Leslie Walker)

Barry Diller may prove Woody Allen was right when he said 80 percent of success is showing up.

The onetime Hollywood mogul first got into electronic commerce more than a decade ago, never left and may end up being one of its biggest successes. It was 1993, soon after he entered the television home-shopping business, that he started extolling the convenience of "buying underwear in your underwear."

When the real electronic commerce wave arrived on personal computers instead of television, Diller regrouped and started buying Internet ventures. Yet except for his failed \$18 billion bid to buy the Lycos Web portal in 1999, Diller has remained largely known as an entertainment and media executive, and his online escapades have attracted little attention.

Until now. The digerati are finally taking notice of Diller's online empire since his conglomerate, USA Interactive (USAI), announced a recent string of takeovers that are transforming it into one of the Internet's superpowers. Diller's moves are part of a consolidation wave gaining speed in the high-tech sector, where start-ups are still struggling to overcome depressed stock prices and an oversupply of goods and services.

"We want to be the largest and most profitable e-commerce company utilizing multiple brands," Diller, chief executive of USAI, declared in an interview this week. (Diller is a director of The Washington Post Co.)

Diller's recent acquisitions appear to reflect a shift toward more direct forms of commerce online, where new commercial matchmakers that could bypass traditional forms of advertising are catching on.

First, a look at Diller's march across the Web: Since early last year, USA Interactive has announced it will acquire LendingTree Inc., which pairs home buyers with lenders

and real estate agents online; travel agent Expedia Inc., which lets consumers make travel reservations online; British UDate.com, an online personals site; the outstanding shares of Hotels.com, an online provider of discount lodging bookings; and the remaining shares of Ticketmaster, the electronic ticketing agency in which USAI first took a 50 percent stake back in 1997.

Also in the past year, Diller's company snapped up a string of offline travel-related companies, including the Entertainment discount-coupon book, the vacation exchange network Interval International and Britain's TV Travel Group. USAI already owned various "back office" services, thanks to acquisitions made a few years ago. In 1999, for example, it bought one of the world's biggest customer call-center operations, Precision Response Corp., which also conducts e-mail marketing campaigns and database services. And, of course, USAI still owns the Home Shopping Network.

As a result of its takeovers, USA Interactive appears poised to take in more than \$6 billion in revenue this year—more than Amazon.com, eBay, Yahoo or any other Internet firm except America Online.

Diller said that his Internet binge is not over. He intends to buy more Net gems and hinted that LendingTree points in the direction he is headed. (Think financial services.) Some analysts worry that the LendingTree deal, a stock swap valued at roughly \$700 million, may be inflated because the home refinancing wave caused a temporary spurt in its business. But Diller discounts such talk. "We couldn't care less what happens in the very, very, very near term," he told analysts when he announced the deal last month. "What we care about is that we've bought the right business in the right category."

Still, his company seems to garner more dollars than respect, perhaps because it resembles a giant Internet puzzle with the pieces not yet snapped into place. That may explain why Diller said this week he is flirting with changing the name of his company again. USAI has gone by at least five names in the past, none too memorable. The latest moniker makeover came last year when it sold off its cable TV channels and replaced "Networks" in "USA Networks" with "Interactive" to focus more on electronic commerce.

Diller said the company's current mission is to act as a "middleman" between supply and demand in interactive commerce, making it more like eBay than retailer Amazon.com. Like eBay, USAI's companies typically take commissions for matching buyers and sellers. They hold little or no inventory, which lowers their costs and potentially boosts profit margins.

eBay mostly auctions used goods but is aggressively courting sellers of new merchandise as part of its avowed bid to become "the world's marketplace." While analysts think this could make it a head-to-head competitor with USAI, Diller doesn't see it that way. He said he doubts eBay will succeed in becoming the world's marketplace: "They are not going to make the transition in every category to a fixed-price model," he predicted, "and will be predominantly based in peer-to-peer auctions."

Time will tell how much advantage can be gained from lumping together different Internet entities or "multiple brands" online. But for starters, there should be savings from no longer having to run five separate public accounting operations for LendingTree, Expedia, Hotels.com, Ticketmaster and USA Interactive, all of which have been trading under separate stock symbols. After buying a controlling stake in Expedia from Microsoft Corp. last